

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

D. Grant Types

There are five main categories of grant types available across the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). These are described below:

1. Standard Grants

Standard Grants support targeted original scientific Research, Education, Extension, or Integrated Projects.

2. Coordinated Agricultural Project

Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP) is a type of Research, Education, Extension, or Integrated Project that supports large-scale, multi-million dollar projects to promote collaboration, open communication, and the exchange of information; reduce duplication of effort; and coordinate activities among individuals, institutions, States, and regions. Integrated CAP Grants address problems through multi-function projects that incorporate at least two of the three components of the agricultural knowledge system (*i.e.*, research, extension, and education), although some program areas may require that CAP grant applications include all three components of the agricultural knowledge system. In a CAP, participants serve as a team that conducts targeted research, education, and/or extension in response to emerging or priority area(s) of national need. Applications articulate how a CAP will complement and/or link with existing programs or projects at the national level. A CAP contains the needed science-based expertise in research, education, and/or extension, as well as expertise from principal stakeholders and partners, to accomplish project goals and objectives. Applications should outline the potential of the project, the structure, coordination, and plan of implementation, and propose several research, education, and/or extension areas that will be evaluated during the study period. All Research, Education, Extension, and Integrated Project requirements described under Project Types (<http://nifa.usda.gov/afri-request-applications>) apply to CAP Grants.

3. Conference Grants

Conference Grants support scientific meetings that bring together scientists to identify research, education, and/or extension needs, update information, or advance an area of science. These activities are recognized as integral parts of scientific efforts. Support for a limited number of meetings covering subject matter encompassed by this solicitation will be considered for partial or, if modest, total support. Individual conference grants are not expected to exceed \$50,000 for one year and are not renewable. Indirect costs are not permitted on Conference Grant awards. For all requests of \$25,000 or more, applicants should consult with the program contact listed in the request for applications (RFA) regarding suitability of the application for submission to the relevant program area priority.

4. Food and Agricultural Science Enhancement Grants

Food and Agricultural Science Enhancement (FASE) Grants strengthen science capabilities in research, education, and/or extension programs. FASE Grants are designed

to help institutions develop competitive projects, and to attract new scientists and educators into careers in high-priority areas of national need in agriculture, food, and environmental sciences. FASE Grants provide support for Pre- and Postdoctoral Fellowships, New Investigators, and Strengthening Grants. Specific eligibility requirements for these grants are described below.

a. Pre- and Postdoctoral Fellowships Grants

Pre- and Postdoctoral Fellowships Grants provide fellowships to predoctoral, and postdoctoral students in the agricultural sciences. The program goals are to prepare the next generation of scientists through doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships.

b. New Investigator Grants

An individual who is beginning their career, does not have an extensive scientific publication record, and has less than five years postgraduate career-track experience is encouraged to submit an application for a New Investigator Grant for research, education, and/or extension activities. The new investigator may not have received competitively awarded Federal research funds as Project Director (PD) with the exception of pre- or postdoctoral grants or AFRI Seed Grants. Eligibility requirements for a New Investigator Grant apply only to the PD and not to Co-PDs or collaborators. The application must contain documentation that lists all prior Federal support. The work proposed for New Investigator Grants must address a specific Program Area Priority described Part I, C, of the RFA.

c. Strengthening Grants

These funds are expected to enhance institutional capacity with the goal of leading to future funding in the project area, as well as strengthen the competitiveness of the investigator's research, education, and/or extension activities. Strengthening Grants consist of Seed Grants, Equipment Grants, Sabbatical Grants, Strengthening Standard Grants, Strengthening Coordinated Agricultural Projects (CAP) Grants and Strengthening Conference Grants. The work proposed for Strengthening Grants must address specific Program Area Priorities described under Program Area Descriptions in Part I, C., of the RFA. All applications submitted for Strengthening Grants must fulfill the eligibility requirements described below.

1) Strengthening Grants Eligibility

Strengthening grants are limited to 1) small and mid-sized or minority-serving degree-granting institutions that previously had limited institutional success for receiving Federal funds or 2) State Agricultural Experiment Stations or degree-granting institutions eligible for USDA Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) funding. The grants submitted by these institutions are eligible for reserved strengthening funds for Research, Education, Extension, and Integrated Project grants. See Figure 1 in the RFA to assist with determining eligibility for Strengthening Grants. Eligibility requirements for Strengthening Grants apply only to the PD's institution and not to the institutions of Co-PDs or collaborators.

2) Strengthening Grants Eligibility Definitions

a) **EPSCoR States** (<http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/afri-fase-epscor-program>)

Every year, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) determines the states that are eligible for USDA EPSCoR funding. This list includes states having a funding level no higher than the 38th percentile of all States based on a 3-year rolling average of AFRI funding levels, excluding FASE Strengthening funds granted to EPSCoR States and small-mid-sized and minority-serving degree-granting institutions.

FY 2017:

This is the eighth year of the AFRI program and while significant FY 2015 funds are unobligated, the eligibility determinations are based on the data obtained from grants made through the AFRI program from 2012 through 2014. For FY 2016, the following States meet the requirements for this category:

FY 2017 USDA EPSCoR States		
Alaska	Nevada	South Carolina
Connecticut	New Hampshire	South Dakota
Idaho	New Jersey	Utah
Louisiana	New Mexico	West Virginia
Maine	North Dakota	Wyoming
Mississippi	Oklahoma	
Montana	Rhode Island	

Other entities eligible for USDA EPSCoR funds in FY 2016 include the following United States commonwealths, territories, possessions and their successors, and the District of Columbia:

Other Entities eligible for USDA EPSCoR Funds	
American Samoa	Northern Mariana Islands
District of Columbia	Puerto Rico
Guam	Virgin Islands of the U.S.
Micronesia	

- b) **Small and mid-sized institutions** are academic institutions with a current total enrollment of 17,500 or less, including graduate and undergraduate as well as full- and part-time students. An institution in this instance is an organization that possesses a significant degree of autonomy as defined by being independently accredited in the current version of the Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 1801 Robert Fulton Drive, Suite 340, Reston, Virginia 20191 (Phone: (888) 349-7715; www.hepinc.com).
- c) **Minority-serving institutions** are academic institutions whose enrollment of a single minority group or a combination of minority groups (as defined in Part

VIII, H of the RFA) exceeds 50 percent of the total enrollment, including graduate and undergraduate as well as full- and part-time students.

Applicants applying under this category should indicate the current percentage of applicable minority students enrolled at the institution in a cover letter. An institution in this instance is an organization that possesses a significant degree of autonomy as defined by being independently accredited in the current version of the Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 1801 Robert Fulton Drive, Suite 340, Reston, Virginia 20191 (Phone: (888) 349-7715; www.hepinc.com). A list of post-secondary minority-serving institutions can be found at www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst.html.

- d) **Limited institutional success** is defined as institutions that are not among the most successful universities and colleges for receiving Federal funds for science and engineering research and development. See Table 1 (<http://nifa.usda.gov/afri-request-applications>) for an alphabetical list of the most successful institutions.

All institutions grouped under one main campus as listed in Table 1 (<http://nifa.usda.gov/afri-request-applications>), unless located in an EPSCoR state, are excluded from eligibility for all strengthening funds. The institution may petition for an exemption to this rule as described in Part III, B of the RFA.

3) Strengthening Grant Types

An individual applicant may submit only one of the following types of strengthening applications (Sabbatical Grants, Equipment Grants, and Seed Grants) as Project Director (PD) the current fiscal year. Investigators are encouraged to contact the appropriate Program Area Priority Contact, regarding suitability of project topics to verify that their submission is appropriate to the program area priority. For Equipment Grants, investigators are encouraged to contact the appropriate Program Area Priority Contact regarding appropriateness of requested equipment for topics within program area priority requirements.

a) **Seed Grants**

Seed Grants are to provide funds to enable investigators to collect preliminary data or perform other preliminary activities in preparation for applying for future grants from AFRI. The grants are not intended to fund stand-alone projects, but rather projects that will lead to further work applicable to one of the AFRI Program Areas. Seed Grant applications proposing an Integrated Project only need to include one of the three functions (research, education, extension) and justify how this Seed Grant will allow the applicant to become competitive for future Integrated Project funding.

Seed Grants are limited to a total of \$150,000 (including indirect costs) for up to 2-years in duration and are not renewable.

b) Equipment Grants

Equipment Grants are designed to strengthen the research, education, and/or extension capacity of institutions by funding the purchase of one major piece of equipment. These grants are not intended to replace requests for equipment in individual project applications. Rather, they are intended to help fund items of equipment that will upgrade infrastructure. Requests for computer equipment are allowed only if the equipment is to be used in an activity integral to the proposed project. Requests for computer equipment will not be permitted if the equipment will primarily serve as a word processor or perform administrative functions.

Each request shall be limited to one major piece of equipment within the cost range of \$10,000-\$250,000 and are not renewable. The amount of Federal funding requested shall not exceed 50 percent of the cost or \$50,000, whichever is less. Unless a waiver is granted by NIFA using the criteria listed in Part III, C., of the RFA, it is the responsibility of the PD to secure required matching funds with non-Federal funds (see Part III, C for more information). No installation, maintenance, warranty, or insurance expenses may be paid from these grants, nor may these costs be part of the matching funds. Indirect costs are not permitted on Equipment Grant awards.

c) Sabbatical Grants

Sabbatical Grants are to provide an opportunity for faculty to enhance their research, education, and/or extension capabilities by funding sabbatical leaves. Collaborative arrangements are encouraged. Grants will be limited to one year of salary and funds for travel and supplies, where justified, and are not renewable.

NIFA also encourages and will support the concept of “mini-sabbaticals” for faculty and researchers desiring short-term training to learn new techniques that will improve their competitiveness. These short-term training opportunities generally follow all of the sabbatical requirements described beginning in Part IV, C., of the RFA but for a shorter duration. These grants may be used to participate in short courses offered at various research institutions.

d) Strengthening Standard Grants

Standard Grant applications that meet the eligibility requirements for Strengthening Grants are eligible for reserved strengthening funds as Strengthening Standard Grants. The eligibility requirements only apply to the lead PD and are not required for co-PD(s) associated with the project.

e) Strengthening Coordinated Agricultural Projects

Coordinated Agricultural Projects (CAP) grant applications that meet the eligibility requirements for Strengthening Grants are eligible for reserved

strengthening funds as Strengthening CAP Grants. The eligibility requirements only apply to the lead PD and are not required for co-PD(s) associated with the project.

f) Strengthening Conference Grants

Conference Grant applications that meet the eligibility requirements for Strengthening Grants are eligible for reserved strengthening funds as Strengthening Conference Grants. The eligibility requirements only apply to the lead PD and are not required for co-PD(s) associated with the project.

5. Other Grants (Collaborative)

The Collaborative Project Grant is a type of Research, Education, Extension, or Integrated Project that allows AFRI programs to partner resources with other funding organizations to address high priority mission areas of mutual interest, without either organization transferring funds to the other. For AFRI programs soliciting Collaborative Project Grants, a single proposal is submitted to the program; it must contain all of the requisite sections for an AFRI application, in addition to information that may be outlined in the specific program description. The overall project must demonstrate an integrated, collaborative approach; the specific contributions and responsibilities of the AFRI and partner agency teams to the objectives must be set out clearly in the proposal's project narrative and reflected in the budget justifications. The advantages of the multi-organizational effort must be clearly described in the Project Narrative, as well as the specific managerial arrangements to assure strong coordination among teams. Work proposed to be supported by AFRI cannot duplicate what would be funded by the partners, and vice-versa. To be competitive for funding, a Collaborative Project Grant must clearly demonstrate a substantial and meaningful collaboration between the AFRI and non-AFRI funded teams. Work proposed to be funded by each agency (and therefore each agency's budget) must be integral to the success of at least one of the application objectives. If a Collaborative Project Grant is funded, AFRI makes an award to support objectives done by the AFRI Project Director and/or co-Project Directors. A separate award is made by the partner agency that supports objectives done by its team of Project Director and/or co-Project Directors. While Collaborative Project Grants are solicited in a limited number of areas, all AFRI applications may continue to include subcontracts to other institutions for work also supported by AFRI.